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1. CHIEF [] SEC STATE AND SEC DEF HAVE BEEN ASKED BY WHITE HOUSE TO PREPARE MAJOR PAPERS AS INPUT TO NSC REVIEW OF VIETNAM OPTIONS. ALL THREE HAVE BEEN GIVEN PARALLEL LIST OF 28 QUESTIONS WITH REQUEST FOR DETAILED ANSWERS TO EACH. ANSWER PACKAGE TO BE SUBMITTED TO WHITE HOUSE NO LATER THAN OOB MONDAY, 10 FEBRUARY. EACH COMPONENT TO SUBMIT ITS ANSWERS SEPARATELY. JCS, AMBASSADOR BUNKER AND MACV WILL ALSO BE TASKED WITH PREPARING THEIR SEPARATE LIST OF ANSWERS. GENERAL GUIDELINE, REFLECTED IN OFFICIAL REQUESTING MEMO, IS THAT QUOTE THE ANSWERS SHOULD INCLUDE A DISCUSSION OF UNCERTAINTIES AND POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATIONS OF EXISTING DATA.

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2. WE WILL NOT BURDEN YOU WITH THOSE QUESTIONS ON WHICH YOUR INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE IS MARGINAL. WE WILL NEED, HOWEVER, YOUR COMMENTS AND INPUTS TO THE 22 QUESTIONS ENUMERATED BELOW. PLEASE MAKE SEPARATE REPLIES (NOT NECESSARILY ALL IN ONE CABLE) TO EACH QUESTION, PREFIXING YOUR ANSWER WITH THE KEY NUMBER APPEARING BELOW. TO MEET OUR DEADLINES HERE, WE WILL NEED TO HAVE ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS IN HAND BY WASHINGTON COB, MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 1969.

(5) WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING VARIOUS HYPOTHESES, AND THE OVERALL ADEQUACY OF EVIDENCE, RELATING TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

(A) WHY DID NVA UNITS LEAVE SOUTH VIETNAM LAST SUMMER AND FALL?

(B) DID THE PREDICTED "THIRD-WAVE OFFENSIVE" BY THE NVA/VC ACTUALLY TAKE PLACE? IF SO, WHY DID IT NOT ACHIEVE GREATER SUCCESS?

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(C) WHY ARE VC GUERRILLAS AND LOCAL FORCES NOW
RELATIVELY DORMANT?

(AMONG THE HYPOTHESES: 1) RESPONSE TO VC/NVA
BATTLE LOSSES, FORCING WITHDRAWAL OR
PASSIVITY; 2) TO PUT DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE ON
U.S. TO MOVE TO SUBSTANTIVE TALKS IN PARIS;
3) TO PREPARE FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS; AND/OR
4) PRESSURE OF U.S. AND ALLIED OPERATIONS.)

(6) WHAT RATE OF NVA ATTRITION WOULD OUTFRAN THEIR ABILITY
TO REPLENISH BY INFILTRATION AND RECRUITMENT, AS CUR-
RENTLY CALCULATED? DO PRESENT OPERATIONS ACHIEVE
THIS? IF NOT, WHAT FORCE LEVELS AND OTHER CONDITIONS
WOULD BE NECESSARY? IS THERE ANY EVIDENCE THEY ARE
CONCERNED ABOUT CONTINUING HEAVY LOSSES?

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(7) TO WHAT RELATIVE EXTENT DO THE U.S./RVNAF AND THE NVA/VC SHARE IN THE CONTROL AND THE RATE OF VC/NVA ATTRITION; I.E., TO WHAT EXTENT, IN TERMS OF OUR TACTICAL EXPERIENCE, CAN HEAVY LOSSES PERSISTENTLY BE IMPOSED ON VC/NVA FORCES, DESPITE THEIR POSSIBLE INTENTION TO LIMIT CASUALTIES BY AVOIDING CONTACT? (AMONG THE HYPOTHESES:

- A. CONTACT IS PREDOMINANTLY AT VC TACTICAL INITIATIVE, AND WE CANNOT REVERSE THIS; VC NEED SUFFER HIGH CASUALTIES ONLY SO LONG AS THEY ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT THEM, IN SEEKING CONTACT; OR
- B. CURRENT VC/NVA LOSS RATES CAN BE MAINTAINED BY PRESENT FORCES -- AS INCREASED X% BY Y ADDITIONAL FORCES -- WHATEVER THE DRV/VC CHOOSE TO DO, SHORT OF FURTHER MAJOR WITHDRAWAL.)

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- (9) WHAT ARE NVA/VC CAPABILITIES FOR LAUNCHING A LARGE-SCALE OFFENSIVE, WITH "DRAMATIC" RESULTS (EVEN IF TAKING HIGH CASUALTIES AND WITHOUT HOLDING OBJECTIVES LONG), IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS? (E.G., AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST ONE OR MORE CITIES, OR AGAINST MOST NEWLY "PACIFIED" HAMLETS.) HOW ADEQUATE IS THE EVIDENCE?
- (10A) WHAT DIFFERENCES OF OPINION EXIST CONCERNING EXTENT OF RVNAF IMPROVEMENT, AND WHAT IS EVIDENCE UNDERLYING DIFFERENT VIEWS? (E.G., COMPARE RECENT CIA MEMO WITH MACV VIEWS.) FOR EXAMPLE:
- A. WHICH IS THE LEVEL OF EFFECTIVE, MOBILE, OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS? WHAT RESULTS ARE THEY ACHIEVING?
- B. WHAT IS THE ACTUAL LEVEL OF "GENUINE" SMALL-UNIT ACTIONS AND NIGHT ACTIONS IN ARVN, RF, AND PF: I.E., ACTIONS THAT WOULD TYPICALLY BE CLASSED AS SUCH

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- WITHIN THE U.S. ARMY, AND IN PARTICULAR, OFFENSIVE
 AMBUSHES AND PATROLS? HOW MUCH HAS THIS CHANGED?
- C. HOW MUCH HAS THE OFFICER SELECTION AND PROMOTION
 SYSTEM, AND THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP, ACTUALLY
 CHANGED OVER THE YEARS (AS DISTINCT FROM CHANGES
 IN PAPER "PROGRAMS")? HOW MANY JUNIOR OFFICERS
 HOLD COMMISSIONS (IN PARTICULAR, BATTLEFIELD COM-
 MISSIONS FROM NCO RANK) DESPITE LACK OF A HIGH
 SCHOOL DIPLOMA?
- D. WHAT KNOWN DISCIPLINARY ACTION HAS RESULTED FROM
 ARVN LOOTING OF CIVILIANS IN THE PAST YEAR (FOR
 EXAMPLE, THE WIDESPREAD LOOTING THAT TOOK PLACE
 LAST SPRING)?

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E. TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE PAST "ANTI-DESERTION" DECREES AND EFFORTS LESSENED THE RATE OF DESERTION; WHAT HAS THE RATE RECENTLY BEEN INCREASING TO NEW HIGHS?

F. WHAT SUCCESS ARE THE RF AND PF HAVING IN PROVIDING LOCAL SECURITY AND REDUCING VC CONTROL AND INFLUENCE IN RURAL POPULATIONS?

(11) TO WHAT EXTENT COULD RVNAF--AS IT IS NOW--HANDLE THE VC (MAIN FORCE, LOCAL FORCES, GUERRILLAS), WITH OR WITHOUT U.S. COMBAT SUPPORT TO FILL RVNAF DEFICIENCIES, IF ALL VNA UNITS WERE WITHDRAWN:

A. IF VC STILL HAD NORTHERN FILLERS.

B. IF ALL NORTHERNERS (BUT NOT REGROUPEES) WERE WITHDRAWN.

(12) TO WHAT EXTENT COULD RVNAF--AS IT IS NOW-- ALSO HANDLE A SIZEABLE LEVEL OF NVA FORCES:

A. WITH U.S. AIR AND ARTILLERY SUPPORT.

B. WITH ABOVE AND ALSO U.S. GROUND FORCES IN RESERVE.

C. WITHOUT U.S. DIRECT SUPPORT, BUT WITH INCREASED RVNAF ARTILLERY AND AIR CAPACITY?

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(13) WHAT, IN VARIOUS VIEWS, ARE THE REQUIRED CHANGES--IN RVNAF COMMAND, ORGANIZATION, EQUIPMENT, TRAINING AND INCENTIVES, IN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, IN LOGISTICAL SUPPORT, IN U.S. MODES OF INFLUENCE--FOR MAKING RVNAF ADEQUATE TO THE TASKS CITED IN QUESTIONS 9 AND 10 ABOVE? HOW LONG WOULD THIS TAKE? WHAT ARE THE PRACTICAL OBSTACLES TO THESE CHANGES, AND WHAT NEW U.S. MOVES WOULD BE NEEDED TO OVER-
COME THESE?

PACIFICATION

(14) HOW MUCH, AND WHERE, HAS THE SECURITY SITUATION AND THE BALANCE OF ~~NEW~~ INFLUENCE BETWEEN THE VC AND NLF ACTUALLY CHANGED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OVER TIME, ~~XXXX~~ CONTRASTING THE ~~XXXX~~ PRESENT TO SUCH BENCHMARKS AS END-61, END-63, END-65, END-67? WHAT ARE THE BEST INDICATORS OF SUCH CHANGE, OR LACK OF IT? WHAT FACTORS HAVE BEEN MAINLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCH CHANGE AS HAS OCCURRED? WHAT HAS THERE NOT BEEN MORE?

(15) WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR EXPECTING MORE CHANGE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS THAN IN PAST INTERVALS? WHAT ~~XXX~~ (CONTINUED)

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ARE THE REASONS FOR NOT EXPECTING MORE? WHAT CHANGES IN RVNAF, GVN, U.S., AND VC PRACTICES AND ADAPTIVENESS WOULD BE NEEDED TO INCREASE FAVORABLE CHANGE IN SECURITY AND CONTROL? HOW LIKELY ARE SUCH CHANGES, INDIVIDUALLY AND TOGETHER; WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES?

(16) WHAT PROPORTION OF THE RURAL POPULATION MUST BE REGARDED AS "SUBJECT TO SIGNIFICANT VC PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE?" (HOW SHOULD HAMLETS RATED AS "C" IN THE HAMLET EVALUATION SYSTEM--THE LARGEST CATEGORY--BE REGARDED IN THIS RESPECT?) IN PARTICULAR, WHAT PROPORTION IN THE PROVINCES SURROUNDING SAIGON? HOW MUCH HAS THIS CHANGED?

(17) WHAT NUMBER ~~XXXX~~ OR VERIFIED NUMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST POLITICAL APPARATUS (I.E., PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY MEMBERS, THE HARD-CORE "INFRASTRUCTURE") HAVE BEEN ARRESTED OR KILLED IN THE PAST YEAR? HOW MANY OF THESE WERE CADRE OF HIGHER THAN VILLAGE LEVEL? WHAT PROPORTION DO THESE REPRESENT OF TOTAL PRP MEMBERSHIP, AND HOW MUCH -- AND HOW LONG--HAD THE APPARATUS BEEN DISRUPTED?

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(18) WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR BELIEVING THAT CURRENT AND FUTURE EFFORTS AT "ROOTING OUT" HARD-CORE INFRASTRUCTURE WILL BE--OR WILL NOT BE--MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN PAST EFFORTS? FOR EXAMPLE, FOR BELIEVING THAT COLLABORATION AMONG THE NUMEROUS VIETNAMESE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES WILL BE MARKEDLY MORE THOROUGH THAN IN THE PAST? WHAT ARE THE SIDE-EFFECTS, E.G., ON VIETNAMESE OPINION, OF ANTI-INFRASTRUCTURE CAMPAIGNS SUCH AS THE CURRENT "ACCELERATED EFFORT," ALONG WITH THEIR LASTING EFFECT ON HARD-CORE APPARATUS?

(19) HOW ADEQUATE IS OUR INFORMATION ON THE OVERALL SCALE AND INCIDENCE OF DAMAGE TO CIVILIANS BY AIR AND ARTILLERY, AND LOOTING AND MISBEHAVIOR BY RVNAF:

(20) TO WHAT EXTENT DO RECENT CHANGES IN COMMAND AND ADMINISTRATION AFFECTING THE COUNTRYSIDE REPRESENT MOVES TO IMPROVE COMPETENCE, AND ~~EXIST~~ DISTINCT FROM REPLACEMENT OF ONE CLIQUE BY ANOTHER? WHAT IS THE BASIS OF JUDGMENT? WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE RECENT REMOVAL OF MINORITY-GROUP PROVINCE AND DISTRICT OFFICIALS

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IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS?

POLITICS

(21) HOW ADEQUATE IS OUR INFORMATION, AND WHAT IS IT BASED UPON,
CONCERNING:

A. ATTITUDES OF VIETNAMESE ELITES NOT NOW CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH
THE GVN (E.G., RELIGIOUS LEADERS, PROFESSORS, YOUTH LEADERS, PROFESS-
IONALS, UNION LEADERS, VILLAGE NOTABLES) TOWARDS: PARTICIPATION--IF
OFFERED--IN THE GVN; THE CURRENT LEGITIMACY AND ACCEPTABILITY OF THE
GVN; LIKEWISE (GIVEN "PEACE") FOR THE NLF OR VARIOUS "NEUTRALIST" COAL-
ITIONS; TOWARDS U.S. INTENT, AS THEY INTERPRET IT (E.G., U.S. PLANS FOR
ENDING THE WAR, PERCEIVED U.S. ALIGNMENTS WITH PARTICULAR INDIVIDUALS
AND FORCES WITHIN VIETNAM, U.S. CONCERN FOR VARIOUS VIETNAMESE
INTERESTS).

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AND BROADENING OF THE GVN, AND RESPONSES TO U.S. INFLUENCE AND INTERVENTION.

(22) WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE ON THE PROSPECTS--AND ON WHAT CHANGES IN CONDITIONS AND U.S. POLICIES WOULD INCREASE OR DECREASE THEM--FOR CHANGES IN THE GVN TOWARD: (A) BROADENING OF THE GOVERNMENT TO INCLUDE PARTICIPATION OF ALL SIGNIFICANT NON-COMMUNIST REGIONAL AND ARLKHOOS GROUPINGS (AT PROVINCE AND DISTRICT LEVELS, AS WELL AS CABINET); (B) STRONGER EMPHASIS, IN ~~SIX~~ SELECTION AND PROMOTION OF OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS, ON COMPETENCE AND PERFORMANCE (AS IN THE COMMUNIST VIETNAMESE SYSTEM) AS DISTINCT FROM CONSIDERATIONS OF FAMILY, CORRUPTION, AND SOCIAL (E.G., EDUCATIONAL) BACKGROUND; AND (C) POLITICAL MOBILIZATION OF NON-COMMUNIST ~~SYX~~ SYMPATHIES AND ENERGIES IN SUPPORT OF THE GVN, AS EVIDENCED, E.G., BY REDUCED DESERTION, BY WILLING ALIGNMENT OF RELIGIOUS, PROVINCIAL AND OTHER LEADERS WITH THE GVN, BY WIDE COOPERATION WITH ANTI-CORRUPTION AND PRO-EFFICIENCY DRIVES.

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(23) HOW CRITICAL, IN VARIOUS VIEWS, IS EACH OF THE CHANGES IN QUESTION 22 ABOVE TO PROSPECTS OF ATTAINING--AT CURRENT, REDUCED OR INCREASED LEVELS OF U.S. MILITARY EFFORT--EITHER "VICTORY," OR A STRONG NON-COMMUNIST POLITICAL ROLE AFTER A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT OF HOSTILITIES? WHAT ARE VIEWS OF THE RISKS ATTENDANT TO MAKING THESE CHANGES, OR ATTEMPTING THEM; AND, TO THE EXTENT THAT U.S. INFLUENCE IS REQUIRED, ON U.S. PRACTICAL ABILITY TO MOVE PRUDENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY IN THIS DIRECTION? WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?

U.S. OPERATIONS

(24) HOW DO U.S. MILITARY DEPLOYMENT AND TACTICS TODAY DIFFER FROM THOSE OF 6-12 MONTHS AGO? WHAT ARE REASONS FOR CHANGES, AND WHAT HAS THIS IMPACT BEEN?

(25) IN WHAT DIFFERENT WAYS (INCLUDING INNOVATIONS IN ORGANIZATION) MIGHT U.S. FORCE-LEVELS BE REDUCED TO VARIOUS LEVELS, WHILE MINIMIZING IMPACT ON COMBAT CAPABILITY?

(26) WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE ON THE SCALE OF EFFECT OF B-52 ATTACKS IN PRODUCING VC-NVA CASUALTIES? IN DISRUPTING VC/NVA OPERATIONS? HOW

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VALID ARE ESTIMATES OF OVERALL EFFECT?

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